

Introduction to Biblical Greek

The Verb “To Be” and Further Uses of the Article

Voeltz Ch. 12

Devotion – Galatians 2:16a

εἰδότες [δὲ] ὅτι οὐ δικαιούται
ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ
πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς
Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα
δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ
οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων
νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ.

The “To Be” Verb

- In almost all languages, this is the most common verb. In Greek (and in many other languages), it is also the most irregular form.

Present Active Indicative

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	εἶμί	ἔσμεν
2 nd Person	εἶ	ἐστέ
3 rd Person	ἐστί	εἰσὶ

Imperfect Active Indicative

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	ἤμην	ἤμεν
2 nd Person	ἦς	ἔτε
3 rd Person	ἦν	ἦσαν

Future Middle Indicative

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	ἔσομαι	ἔσόμεθα
2 nd Person	ἔσῃ	ἔσεσθε
3 rd Person	ἔσται , (ἔσεσται)	ἔσονται

Notes about “To Be”

- εἶμι does not appear in aorist, you will find the more regular γίνομαι
- For other tenses and moods other than indicative, there are alternate ways of expressing “to be”

Notes about “To Be”, cont.

- “To be” verbs do not take a DO in accusative form, but in predicate nominative. The same is true in English – it is a concept that is reflected in grammars:
 - “It is I” not “It is me” (although the idiotification of everything is overtaking this)
 - “The Greek students are you and I” not “...you and me”
- The predicate noun must match subject noun in gender, number, and case
- See examples in Section A.4., p 76
- In class practice identifying predicate or attributive Section D, p79

Notes about “To Be”, cont.

- Greek can express “to be” without a verb and does so somewhat frequently
- Example: ἡ παρθένος καλή (the virgin is beautiful)

Further Uses of the Article

- Can make an adjective into a noun, which is often expressed similarly in English: “The dead are in the tombs”, however it is very common in Koine.
- A prepositional phrase sometimes relates to a noun to another noun. See B.2.a, p77f
- An article can turn a prepositional phrase into a noun. See B.2.b, p79

Homework

- Vocabulary
- Section E: Practice Sentences, both Greek to English & English to Greek
- Section I: Bible Passages